(b) State Bank of India (SBI) is operating in 13 countries with a net work of 22 branches the country-wise details of which are as under:—

Sl. No.	Country	No. of branches
1.	Sri Lanka	2
2.	United Kingdom	4
3.	U.S.A.	5
4.	Japan	2
5.	Maladive Island	1
6.	West Germany	1
7.	Bangladesh	1
8.	Baharian	1
9.	Belgium	1
10.	Singapore	1
11.	Hong Kong	1
12.	Panama	1
13.	France	1

(c) to (e) State Bank of India has reported that the selection of officers upto Senior Management Grade Scale-V for posting to foreign branches is made on the basis of a laid procedure which includes *inter-alia* accessment of the past performance, experience and interviews. The Bank has further reported that out of the total number of 240 officers posted abroad at present, 82 officers belong to the JMGS-I, MMGS-II and MMGS-III cadres.

Tourists from Taiwan robbed in Gaya

2597. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE:
SHRI ANANTA SETHI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that a team of 58 tourists from Taiwan have been robbed and their leader has been shot in Gaya district of Bihar by some miscreants on 13th October, 1996.

(b) if so, the details in the matter and the steps have been taken by Government to give relief to these tourists; and

(c) what has been done by the local police to nab the miscreants and what steps are proposed to be taken to prevent such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government of Bihar provided necessary medical treatment to the injured foreigner involved in the incident. The District Administration have taken into custody some suspects of this unfortunate incident.

To provide security and protection to the foreign tourists visiting important tourist places in Bihar, the State Government has directed the concerned District Authorities to ensure intensive day and night patroling.

Voluntary Organisations registered under National T.B. Control Programme

2598. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) how many voluntary organisations have been registered under National Tuberculosis Control Programme as on date;

(b) how many such organisations are currently operating in the State of Gujarat with details of each organisation;

(c) whether the voluntary organisations in Gujarat are regularly being provided with their total requirement of anti-TB drugs, free of cost; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) 59 voluntary organisations have been registered as on date under National Tuberculosis Control Programme.

(b) Voluntary organisations registered under the Programme operating in the State of Gujarat, are as under:—

(1) Mandavi District TB Association, Mandavi, Kutch.

(2) Darbad Shri Gopaldas Desai, Anti-TB Clinic, Kaira, Distt. Anand.

(3) Bhartiya Arogya Nichi TB Clinic. Patan, District Mehsana.

(4) Tuberculosis Relief Organisation, Seth Jhagabhani Chest Clinic Compound, Astodia Darwaja, Ahmedabad.

(c) and (d) Anti-TB drugs are provided free of cost to voluntary organisations as per availability.

Steps to deal with the Problem of Blindness

2599. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the problem of blindness in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken to provide proper treatment to the people suffering from blindness and other eye diseases; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Some of the steps taken by the Government to provide eye care facilities to needy people are as under:—

(1) Strengthening of Ophthalmic infrastructure,

(2) Training of Ophthalmic manpower,

(3) Establishment of Distt. Blindness Control Societies,

(4) Expanding coverage to rural and tribal areas,

(5) Creating awareness about the eye care among the masses,

(6) Revising the pattern of assistance to States/UTs and NGOs,

(7) Increasing financial outlay in the annual budget, and

(8) Strengthening the monitoring of Eye Care activities at the Central, State and District level.

Criteria for appointment of non-official Directors on Board of Punjab & Sind Bank

2600. SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) criteria/guidelines being followed while appointing non-official directors on Board of Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB);

(b) names of non-official directors on PSB's Board;

(c) details of meetings held by present Board, meeting-wise with important decisions taken by it and contribution by said non-official directors in these decisions;

(d) whether said directors or their relatives are availing any loan/advance facilities from PSB; if so, details thereof; and

(e) whether Government propose revamping of said Board in near future and also to induct directors from North-Eastern States; if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The non-official directors on the boards of Punjab & Sind Bank have been appointed in accordance with the criteria and procedure prescribed in the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980 and the Nationalised Banks (Management and Miscellaneous Provisions) Scheme, 1980.

(b) The names of the non-official directors on the board of directors of Punjab & Sind Bank are indicated below:—

1. Shri Kamal Kishore Gupta
2. Shri Vivek Mehra
3. Shri Norbu Barongpa
4. Shri Rapolu Jayaprakash
5. Shri R.L. Chaudhary